

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 SSO-00 /023 R

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APPROVED BY:D:DABRIZILL

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 175160

FOR THE DEPUTY SECY FROM BRIZILL

FOLLOWING REPEAT BEIRUT 3601 ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN CAIRO
DAMASCUS JIDDA TEL AVIV USCINCEUR DATED JUL 26:

QTE: O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3601

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV LE SY PLO

SUBJ: PALESTINIAN-SYRIAN-LEBANESE AGREEMENT

REF: (A) BEIRUT 3398, (B) BEIRUT 3542

1. SUMMARY: PALESTINIANS TOGETHER WITH SYRIANS AND LEBANESE
HAVE AGREED TO PLAN TO "IMPLEMENT" CAIRO ACCORD AND ESTABLISH
CEASE-FIRE IN SOUTH LEBANON. IMPLEMENTATION IS SUPPOSED TO START
JULY 30 AND EVEN FORESEES USE OF ASF TO COLLECT ARMS BY FORCE.
PUBLIC OPTIMISM IS BALANCED BY PRIVATE SKEPTICISMS. END SUMMARY.

2. FOUR-SIDED COMMITTEE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF PLO, LEBANESE
GOVERNMENT, SYRIAN GOVERNMENT, AND ASF LIAISON STAFF (LT. COL.
SAMI KHATIB) MET AT CHTAURA JULY 25. COMMITTEE HAD BEEN FORMED
PRECEDING WEEK AFTER PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP HAD INDICATED WILL-
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INGNESS TO ABIDE BY FAR-REACHING STEPS TO IMPLEMENT CAIRO ACCORD
AND ESTABLISH CEASE-FIRE IN SOUTH LEBANON.

3. COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT END OF MEETING CONTAINS FOLLOWING
SIGNIFICANT POINTS:

A. TWO DETAILED WORK PAPERS PREPARED BY SUB-COMMITTEES PRO-

POSING TIMETABLES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF CAIRO ACCORD WERE APPROVED;

B. "LEGITIMATE LEBANESE FORCES AND THE ARAB DETERRENT FORCES WILL SUPERVISE THE IMPLEMENTATION IN ALL LEBANESE REGIONS, INCLUDING SOUTH LEBANON." (COMMENT: ONLY "LEGITIMATE LEBANESE FORCES" AVAILABLE FOR SUCH A TASK AT PRESENT TIME ARE IN THE BIQAA AND ARE MADE UP OF FORMER MEMBERS OF THE VANGUARDS. END COMMENT.)

C. IMPLEMENTATION WILL BEGIN SATURDAY JULY 30 WITH "ELIMINATION OF ALL ARMED MANIFESTATIONS, PROHIBITION OF ARMED PALESTINIANS OUTSIDE THE CAMPS, THE SURRENDER OF ALL ARMS WHICH ARE IN EXCESS OF THE ARMS PROVIDED FOR IN THE AGREEMENT, AND THE DETERMINATION OF THE POINTS AROUND THE CAMPS WHERE ARAB DETERRENT FORCES WILL BE STATIONED;"

D. ASF THEREAFTER WILL "RAID ALL ARMS DUMPS MAINTAINED IN VIOLATION OF THE AGREEMENT IN ANY PART OF LEBANESE TERRITORY." (COMMENT: THIS WOULD INCLUDE CHRISTIAN ARMS CACHES IN MT. LEBANON AREA. END COMMENT.)

E. THE COMMITTEE WILL MEET AGAIN TO CONSIDER PROGRESS MADE.

4. ACCORDING TO ENGLISH-LANGUAGE IKE, THE FOLLOWING FURTHER DETAILS WERE AGREED UPON, BUT NOT OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED:

A. HEAVY AND MEDIUM WEAPONS WILL BE WITHDRAWN FROM PALESTINIAN CAMPS;

B. ASF WILL PROTECT CAMPS FROM EXTERNAL ATTACK, LATER TO BE REPLACED BY LEBANESE ARMED FORCES;

C. CAMPS WILL BE POLICED INSIDE BY PALESTINIANS ARMED WITH ONLY CONFIDENTIAL

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LIGHT WEAPONS;

D. PALESTINIANS MAY CALL ON ASF FOR ASSISTANCE IN DEFENDING CAMPS AS NEEDED;

E. "ARAB DETERRENT FORCES, WHEN CALLED, WILL ENTER THE PALESTINIAN CAMPS AND LEAVE THEM WHEN THEIR MISSION IS COMPLETED IN COOPERATION WITH THE PALESTINIAN ARMED STRUGGLE COMMAND;"

F. NO PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS, EXCEPT THE PLO ITSELF, MAY HAVE OFFICES OUTSIDE OF THE CAMPS.

5. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, ABU IYAD (FATAH NUMBER TWO) STATED THAT ALL REPEAT ALL PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS, "INCLUDING THE REJECTION FRONT", HAVE AGREED TO PLAN, AND YASSIR ARAFAT (STILL ABROAD) ON JULY 24 ALSO AGREED. ACCORDING TO ABU IYAD, PLAN WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN TWO PHASES. THE FIRST, LASTING FIFTEEN DAYS, WOULD CONSIST PRIMARILY IN ESTABLISHMENT OF A "PROTECTIVE CORDON" OF ASF TROOPS AROUND THE PALESTINIAN CAMPS. THE SECOND PHASE WOULD INVOLVE WITHDRAWALS OF "ARMED ELEMENTS" (PRE-SUBABLY INCLUDING CHRISTIAN MILITIAS) FROM SOUTH LEBANON AND THEIR REPLACEMENT WITH "REGULAR LEBANESE FORCES." (ACCORDING TO PHALANGE POLITICAL BUREAU MEMBER KARIM PAKRADOUNI, QUOTED IN L-ORIENT-LE JOUR JULY 25, THE PLAN WOULD CALL FOR THREE STAGES, THE FIRST IN THE BEIRUT AREA, THE SECOND IN OTHER AREAS OF THE

COUNTRY, THE THIRD IN SOUTH LEBANON.)

6. PALESTINIANS DO NOT INTEND TO DISARM THEMSELVES. Wafa reported that Abu Iyad himself, July 20, speaking to a group of Palestinian students, "declared that the most important part of this agreement is that which guarantees that the masses not be disarmed, and protects the right of the Palestinian revolution to preserve its military presence in South Lebanon."

7. COMMENT: Speaking to an embassy officer July 25, Pakradouni said he estimated chances of successful implementation of this agreement at about 20 percent. He also said Gol, including President Sarkis, was generally skeptical, but believed nothing would be lost by at least giving Palestinians a chance to show
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They mean business. As reported earlier, Lebanese suspect new Palestinian attitude may be an internal Palestinian maneuver and that it depends for its effectiveness on outcome of the internal Palestinian struggle. Another unpredictable factor at this point is attitude of Christian militias, who are in position to torpedo plan in the south. President Sarkis, according to Pakradouni, believes that agreement at least tends to loosen up impasse on application of Cairo accord and situation in South Lebanon, and may generate momentum for future agreements, even if this one is unsuccessful. Prime Minister Hoss July 25 told the press that agreement appears "serious and encouraging."

8. Fonmin Boutros told Ambassador July 26 that Palestinians appeared to mean what they said, but indicated we would have to see. Sun has come out from the clouds a little, but landscape is still obscure. Parker UNQTE Vance

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS, PALESTINIANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 26-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE175160
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: D:DABRIZILL:JH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770267-0174
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770716/aaaaaocj.tel
Line Count: 152
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8a148663-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 BEIRUT 3398, 77 BEIRUT 3542
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1742044
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PALESTINIAN-SYRIAN-LEBANESE AGREEMENT
TAGS: PDEV, LE, SY, PLO
To: WELLINGTON
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8a148663-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009